

GREAT HARWOOD,

February 2nd, 1905.

To the Chairman and Members of the Urban District Council.

Gentlemen,

I have the honour of submitting to your notice my annual report of the sanitary condition of your district, together with the returns of births and deaths for the year ending December 31st, 1904 ; also Forms I., III. and IV. as required by the Local Government Board.

Great Harwood is a township situated on the shoulder and southern slope of an offshoot of the Pennine Range, and is in the basin of the river Ribble. It has an area of 2,863 statute acres and an estimated population of 13,000.

Great Harwood is situated in North-East Lancashire, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles north of Accrington and 5 miles east of Blackburn, with which town it is in communication by a loop line of the L. & Y. Ry. Co. from Blackburn to Burnley.

It is divided roughly into two parts called Cliffe and Nethertown. Cliffe consists of a number of houses, built before any system of sewerage was in existence and with little regard to order. Nethertown is mostly of modern construction, and consists of well-built cottages, mills and workshops, built on good sanitary principles and in good order.

The streets are comparatively wide, and the houses are built of stone obtained from adjacent quarries. The back streets are made wide enough for carts to pass through. The streets are sewered, well-paved, channelled and curbed and the footpaths flagged, and the streets lighted with gas.

Both front and back streets are paved with granite or stone sets, and kept by your scavengers in a satisfactory state.

The principal industry in the town is cotton spinning and cotton cloth weaving.

The inhabitants, on the whole, are a class of people of industrious, cleanly, and thrifty habits, and in many cases the occupier is also the owner of the cottage. They are particularly anxious as to the cleanliness of their dwellings and furniture, and there is a healthy rivalry as to their personal appearance and belongings.

Great Harwood, in my opinion, will compare most favourably with any other manufacturing town in Lancashire.

The position of Great Harwood partly shelters it from the north wind, but the greater part of it is exposed to the cold east and westerly winds that prevail in spring and Autumn. Its water supply is from Dean Clough reservoir situated in the district.

During the year 292 births have been registered of whom 150 were boys and 142 were girls. Estimating the population at 13,000, this gives an annual birth rate of 22.5 per thousand of the inhabitants against 25.8 per thousand in 1903.

The average birth rate for the previous ten years (1894 to 1903) was 27.5 per thousand.

During the same period the number of deaths were 190. 180 of these deaths occurred in your district and 10 in public institutions outside your district. Of these 101 were males and 89 females. This gives a yearly death rate of 14.6 per thousand of the population against a death rate of 12.6 for the year 1903.

The average death rate for the previous ten years (1894 to 1903) was 14.2 per thousand.

The ages at which death occurred were—

Under 1 year of age.....	49
Between 1 and 5 years of age.....	24
" 5 " 15 " 	8
" 15 " 25 " 	7
" 25 " 45 " 	18
" 45 " 65 " 	40
Over 65 " 	44
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Total	190

The causes of death were :—

Bronchitis and Pneumonia... 34	Phthisis and other Tuber- cular diseases 16
Various Cancerous diseases.. 13	Heart disease 15
Measles & its complications.. 17	Senile decay..... 13
Premature birth 8	Enteritis 8
Bright's disease 7	Meningitis 7
Apoplexy, Hemiplegia, and General Paralysis 6	Accidents 6
Whooping Cough 5	Influenza&its complications 4
Dentition..... 4	Cerebral softening 3
Convulsions 3	Cirrhosis of Liver..... 2
Peritonitis 2	Diarrhoea 2
Suicides 2	Enteric Fever 1
Other Causes not necessary to particularise	12
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Total 190	

The death rate of infants under one year of age has been 167·8 per thousand of births registered against 102·2 per thousand for the year 1903.

The previous ten years (1894 to 1903) show an average of 140·9 per thousand of births registered.

This increase in the infantile mortality I attribute partly to the epidemic of measles which you will remember was prevailing at the commencement of the year, and partly to the prevalence of whooping cough and other diseases of the respiratory organs.

Eight deaths have occurred from Prematurity against seven in 1903, though the birth rate has fallen from 25·8 per thousand in 1903 to 22·5 per thousand in 1904. This no doubt is partially due to the fact that females continue to work at the mills longer than is advisable.

31 persons have died who were over 70 years of age, 2 of whom had reached 80 years of age; 1 each 81, 82 and 83 years respectively, and 3 to the advanced age of 85 years each.

The number of infectious diseases notified to me during the year was 108, viz. :—

	82 cases of Scarlet Fever.
14	„ Enteric „
10	„ Erysipelas.
2	„ Diphtheria.
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Total.....	108

In the previous year the number of Zymotic Diseases notified was 123 cases.

The deaths from the seven principal Zymotic Diseases number 25; a death rate of 1·9 per thousand against 1·3 per thousand in 1903.

You will observe there have been 82 cases of Scarlet Fever notified during the year, viz. :—

36 cases in the first quarter.
14 „ „ second „
16 „ „ third „
16 „ „ last „

These cases have occurred in various parts of your district, and are a continuation of the epidemic which has prevailed for some time. No death has resulted from this cause.

In all cases of Scarlet Fever disinfectants have been supplied by your Council, with printed instructions for their use, and proper isolation of the patient.

Your officials have been also advised that in every case where this disease has existed that thorough fumigation and disinfection of the premises must be adhered to on the convalescence of the patient.

The 14 cases of Typhoid Fever have occurred mostly during the autumn months and have resulted in one death.

Each house, where this disease has occurred, has been visited and inspected. All defects of the premises have been remedied, and the patient isolated as far as possible.

You officials have attended daily and removed all excreta in hermetically sealed buckets, and the excreta after being disinfected has been buried.

In all cases of Zymotic Disease every possible precaution has been taken to prevent its spread.

The markets have been regularly visited, but as no food of an unwholesome nature has been exposed for sale no action has been necessary.

The various schools in the district have been carefully examined with regard to ventilation and sanitary condition of their outbuildings, playgrounds, &c. Defects have been pointed out and improvements recommended where necessary.

One of the disused slaughter-houses in Delph Road has been converted into a public mortuary and equipped with every sanitary convenience, including slab, basin, and hot and cold water.

During the year the registered lodging-house has changed hands and is in much the same condition as in former years.

The mills, workshops, slaughter-houses, bake-houses and laundries have been inspected and are in a fairly satisfactory condition.

Several old sewers which were defective and have been a source of nuisance for many years have been taken up and relaid, and a number of manholes have been provided to other sewers to facilitate inspection.

Houses that were erected before any sewerage scheme was in existence, have in many cases been coupled to the main sewers during the year.

Many houses and mills (the drains from which, on account of their construction, has always been an annoyance) have been re-drained and properly connected.

Several streets and back roads have been sewered, levelled, paved, channelled and flagged.

A number of new houses has been erected.

Several back yards to old property have been flagged, and open ash-pits converted into dry receptacles or ash-bins have been provided.

The scavenging has again been satisfactorily performed by your officials, and the streets kept clean and in fairly good condition.

In conclusion, I again congratulate your Council on the satisfactory condition of your district.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN PATCHETT, L.R.C.P.,

Medical Officer of Health.

